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Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 /031 W
----------120821Z 020665 /13
P R 120725Z FEB 77
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4162
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, IZ
SUBJECT: PROPOSED PENNSYLVANIA STATE IOGA, JUNE 1977

ATHENS FOR RTDO

REF: (A) STATE 24311, (B) STATE 16332, (C) BAGHDAD 167,
(D) BAGHDAD 184.

1. SUMMARY. PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS INDICATE THAT GOI MAY BE RELUCTANT TO RECEIVE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA IOGA JUNE 17-22 IN VIEW OF OTHER US TRADE PROMOTION EVENTS SCHEDULED DURING FIRST HALF OF 1977. WE RECOMMEND THAT SELECTED MEMBERS OF THE TRADE MISSION VISIT IRAQ IN PRIVATE CAPACITY. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 1977, US TRADE PROMOTION ACTIVITIES INCLUDE THE USDOC-SPONSORED WATER RESOURCES TRADE MISSION WHICH VISITED IRAQ IN JANUARY, AND THE EDP SEMINAR SCHEDULED IN FEBRUARY. IN ADDITION, GE IS SCHEDULING A TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR ON POWER SYSTEMS FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 2; THE AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION HAS OBTAINED GOI APPROVAL FOR A SEMINAR ON VEGETABLE
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OILS TO BE HELD IN MARCH OR APRIL; AND THE US FEED GRAINS COUNCIL PLANS TO ORGANIZE A SEMINAR ON SHEEP FEEDING IN LATE SPRING OR EARLY SUMMER. ALTHOUGH THESE LATTER THREE EVENTS DO NOT REQUIRE THAT USINT SEEK FORMAL GOI APPROVAL FROM MFA, THEY DO REQUIRE IRAQI GOVERNMENT AGENCIES COOPERATING IN EVENTS TO SEEK HIGH LEVEL CLEARANCE.

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3. TOGETHER THESE FIVE ACTIVITIES FORM MOST ACTIVE US TRADE PROMOTION PROGRAMS SINCE BREAK IN RELATIONS IN 1967, AND A USINT SOURCE INDICATES THAT GOI MAY BE RELUCTANT TO APPROVE PENNSYLVANIA IOGA IN ADDITION TO THESE OTHER TRADE PROMOTION ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED BEFORE BEGINNING OF IRAQI HOT SEASON.

4. BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IT INADVISABLE TO OVERLOAD SCHEDULE, WE RECOMMEND THAT PENNSYLVANIA IOGA NOT VISIT IRAQ IN JUNE. WE DO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT ITS THEME OF "COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT" MAY ATTRACT SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS WHO MIGHT WANT TO EXPLORE THE IRAQI MARKET IN PRIVATE CAPACITY WHILE THEY ARE IN MIDDLE EAST WITH IOGA. IRAQIS ARE LIKELY TO BE MOST INTERESTED IN REPRESENTATIVES OF WELL-KNOWN US FIRMS. IRAQI PREDILECTION COINCIDES WITH OUR JUDGMENT THAT THESE FIRMS ARE ALSO THE ONES MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN PROMISING BUT DIFFICULT IRAQI MARKET BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE RESOURCES FOR LONG-TERM MARKET DEVELOPMENT.

5. FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC IOGA SUBTHEMES PROVIDE INDICATIONS OF WHAT TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS MAY FIND VISIT TO BAGHDAD PARTICULARLY USEFUL;
-- ARTHITECTURAL SERVICES: IRAQI GOVERNMENT EMPLOYS ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES ONLY IN SELECTED AREAS AND DIRECT MARKET FOR THESE SERVICES IS LIMITED.
-- BUILDING MATERIALS: SEE BEST PROSPECTS REPORT, PRIORITY NO. 2, IN 76 BAGHDAD A-58. GOI OFFICIALS ARE
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MOST INTERESTED IN US FIRMS MANUFACTURING A RANGE OF BUILDING MATERIALS, RATHER THAN ONE SPECIFIC ITEM.
-- COMMUNITY FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION: SEWERAGE CONTRACTS PROBABLY REPRESENT BEST OPPORTUNITY.
-- PREFAB HOUSING: MOST LIKELY SHORT-TERM MARKET IS STRUCTURES TO HOUSE PERSONNEL WORKING ON MAJOR PROJECTS. IN LONGER TERM, IRAQ HAS AN ESTIMATED NEED FOR 125,000 FAMILY HOUSING UNITS A YEAR FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS OR LONGER. TO WHAT EXTENT GOI WILL CONSIDER PREFAB HOUSING TO MEET THIS NEED REMAINS UNKNOWN.
IRAQIS HAVE, HOWEVER, ALREADY CONTRACTED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR PREFAB HOUSING FACTORIES WHICH WILL PRODUCE ABOUT 10,000 UNITS A YEAR, AND ON TWO OCCASIONS SOUNDED OUT VISITING US BUSINESSMEN ABOU THE CONSTRUCTION OF 50 PREFAB HOUSES AS AN EXPERIMENT.
IOGA MEMBERS INTERESTED IN THIS AREA SHOULD BE ALERTED TO IRAQI PREJUDICE AGAINST WOODEN STRUCTURES AND SHOULD CONSIDER VISIT MAINLY IN TERMS OF MARKET RESEARCH.

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-- HEALTH CARE FACILITIES: IRAQIS HAVE ANNOUNCED PLANS
FOR RURAL MEDICAL CENTERS BUT WE HAVE NO INDICATION
OF TIMING.
-- INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS (WATER AND POWER NETWORKS):
GOI HAS AIM OF PROVIDING POTABLE WATER TO ALL TOWNS;
POWER NETWORKS ARE COVERED IN BEST PROSPECTS, PRIORITY
NO. 4, IN 76 BAGHDAD A-58.

6. WE WILL BE GLAD TO PROVIDE MORE DETAILED READING
OF PROSPECTS IN IRAQ FOR INDIVIDUAL FIRMS PARTICIPATING
IN IOGA WHEN RECRUITMENT IS COMPLETED. TO THIS END
WE WOULD WELCOME VISIT OF ADVANCE MAN IF HIS SCHEDULE
PERMITS.

7. PLEASE ALSO INFORM TOM ROGERS THAT GENERAL ELECTRIC
REPRESENTATIVE RECENTLY VISITING BAGHDAD SAID GE'S
DIVISION MAKING PREFAB HOUSING IS LOCATED IN PENNSYLVANNIA
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AND HE BELIEVED IT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING
IN IOGA. HE COULD NOT PROVIDE ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE
NUMBER.
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